either in the ground or even in cans, is to apply a light covering of some type over the plants. Your editor is experimenting this season with a material that promises good results. He is using a polyethelene sheeting of the .003 thickness in the natural color. This sheeting being 14'x 100' will completely cover a large group of plants both in the ground or in cans as the case is at the present. This material is thin enough that even though spread over a large area the weight will not break or damage the top growth of the plants. The color is almost transparent which permits the sunlight to go through and give heat in the daytime even though the temperature might well be of a damaging degree outside the covering. In order to keep an almost air tight enclosure, the outside edges can be kept tight with the ground by spading mounds of dirt or bricks along the edges. If the temperature gets to about 26 or 28 degrees as it often does in northern parts of Florida, then a few 150 watt light bulbs can be put inside the covering well away from the covering. Since the covering will be almost airtight, even this small amount of heat will help to keep the temperature above the damaging point.

The polyethelene sheeting being used in this experiment is named GER-PAC and can be secured from most building material dealers. It can be secured in various widths and mostly in the 100' lengths. The price may seem a little high but when you have some very good varieties that you have worked hard over all summer and want to keep for next season then the value pretty well offsets the cost. Some hibiscus lovers spend as much as 300 dollars to protect those good plants of theirs.

Whatever the covering you might use, when the temperature rises, uncover the plants so that they can get the sunlight and watering that they will need after struggling against the cold spells. Any plants that may have been damaged will need pruning but don't grab those clippers so hastily. Let the plant show for itself how much you should cut back. The frozen

or damaged stems will be soft and pulpy and when scraped the stem will be a brownish color. Cut back until the green shows.

With these suggestions let's try and keep those lovely hibiscus plants for next year and help your neighbor with any suggestions that you think would be of some help.

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WINTERIZING HIBISCUS IN CENTRAL FLORIDA

By L. K. Thompson

By this date, you should have fed your plants with a high potash, low nitrogen fertilizer. One central Florida company is preparing a 0-14-14 formula, which is ideal. 0-6-8 and 0-8-8 is also being offered. This feeding will slow up tender growth and harden your plants for the possible cold days ahead.

Remove mulch from around exposed plants. The insulating properties of mulch prevents the release from the ground of the heat gathered during the day and your plants might need the extra few degrees of heat you will gain. In very cold and exposed locations, bank your plants as high as possible with earth. You may remove it during warm periods, but be sure it is in place if the weather man predicts subfreezing weather. If your plants are damaged by cold, there is no need to remove the frosted portions until later. The idea that the sap can "sour" and cause further damage has been discarded.

Try to protect your plants from the northwest wind that precedes most of our cold waves. The dehydrating action of this cold, dry wind frequently causes more damage than the actual cold.

Do not use any type of oil spray until danger of frost is past.